

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image distribution apparatus comprising:
  - an image input part which receives image information from an image supply source;
  - an image storage medium which stores the image information inputted by said image supply source therein;
  - an operating information input part which inputs operating information including information for specifying a program to be distributed, information relating to a receiver terminal and information relating to a distribution line;
  - an image selecting/processing circuit, when program image information specified by program specification information included in the image information stored in said image storage medium is suitable image information corresponding to said receiver terminal information, which selects and outputs said suitable image information, and, when the program image information specified by said program specification information included in the image information stored in said image storage medium is not suitable image information corresponding to said receiver terminal information, processes the program image information specified by said program specification information included in the image information stored in said image storage medium into

the suitable image information and outputs said processed suitable image information; and

a distribution line selection circuit which selects a suitable distribution line corresponding to said distribution line information and outputs image information outputted from said image selecting/processing circuit to said selected distribution line.

2. An image distribution apparatus comprising:

an image input part which receives a plurality of types of image information for a single program from an image supply source;

an image storage medium which stores the image information inputted to said image input part therein;

an operating information input part which inputs operating information including information for specifying a program to be distributed, information relating to a receiver terminal and information relating to a distribution line;

an image selection circuit which selects suitable image information of program image information specified by program specification information and corresponding to said receiver terminal information among said plurality of types of image information stored in said image storage medium and outputs said suitable image information; and

a distribution line selection circuit which selects a suitable distribution line corresponding to said distribution line information and outputs the image information outputted from said image selection circuit to said selected distribution line.

3. An image distribution apparatus as set forth in claim 2, wherein said receiver terminal information includes type information relating to whether said receiver terminal is of a fixed or portable type, said plurality of types of image information include a plurality of types of advertisement image information, and said image selection circuit selects suitable advertisement image information corresponding to said type information from said plurality of types of advertisement image information stored in said image storage medium.

4. An image distribution apparatus as set forth in claim 2, wherein said receiver terminal information includes information relating to a resolution and physical size of a display circuit of said receiver terminal, said plurality of types of image information include detailed text information and abstract text information, and said image selection circuit, on the basis of said resolution information and physical size information of said display circuit, selects any of said detailed text information and abstract text information stored in said image storage medium and outputs said selected information.

5. An image distribution apparatus as set forth in claim 2, wherein said receiver terminal information includes type information relating to whether said receiver terminal is of a fixed or portable type, and said image selection circuit selects image information of a suitable reproduction time corresponding to said type information from the image information stored in said image storage medium.

6. An image distribution apparatus comprising:

an image input part which receives image information from an image supply source;

an image storage medium which stores the image information received in said image input part therein;

an operating information input part which inputs operating information including information for identifying a program to be distributed, information relating to a resolution and physical size of a display circuit of a receiver terminal, and information relating to a distribution line;

an image processing circuit which receives program image information specified by said program specification information from said image storage medium, and, when the resolution and physical size information of the display circuit indicates that a resolution of said display circuit is lower than a first predetermined value and a physical size of the display circuit is smaller than a second predetermined

value, cuts out and outputs a part said received image information, and, when the resolution of said display circuit is higher than the first predetermined value and the physical size of the display circuit is larger than the second predetermined value, processes the received image information into image information by which a plurality of image information can be displayed on a single display screen and outputs said processed image information; and

a distribution line selection circuit which selects a suitable distribution line corresponding to said distribution line information and outputs image information outputted from said image processing circuit to said selected distribution line.

7. An image distribution apparatus comprising:

an image input part which receives image information including detailed text information from an image supply source;

an image storage medium which stores the image information inputted by said image input part therein;

an operating information input part which inputs operating information including information for specifying a program to be distributed, information relating to a resolution and physical size of a display circuit of a receiver terminal, and information relating to a distribution line;

an image processing circuit which receives program image information specified by the program specification information from said image storage medium, and, when information relating to a resolution and physical size of the display circuit of the receiver terminal indicates that the resolution of said display circuit is lower than a first predetermined value or the physical size of the display circuit is smaller than a second predetermined value, processes said detailed text information into abstract text information and outputs the abstract text information; and

a distribution line selection circuit which selects a suitable distribution line corresponding to said distribution line information and outputs image information outputted from said image processing circuit to said selected distribution line.

8. An image distribution apparatus comprising:

an image input part which receives image information from an image supply source;

an image storage medium which stores the image information inputted to said image input part therein;

an operating information input part which inputs information for specifying a program to be distributed, type information relating to whether a receiver terminal is of a fixed or portable type, and information relating to a distribution line;

an image processing circuit which receives program image information specified by said program specification information from said image storage medium, and, when said type information indicates that the receiver terminal is of the portable type, processes the received image information so as to shorten a reproduction time of the received image information and outputs the processed image information; and

a distribution line selection circuit which selects a suitable distribution line corresponding to said distribution line information and outputs image information outputted from said image processing circuit to said selected distribution line.

9. An image distribution apparatus as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

a storage, when program distribution is interrupted, which stores a break point at which the program distribution was interrupted for each user therein.

10. An image distribution apparatus as set forth in claim 2, further comprising:

a storage, when program distribution is interrupted, which stores a break point at which the program distribution was interrupted for each user therein.

11. An image distribution apparatus as set forth claim 1, wherein said operating information includes

priorities of a plurality of programs desired by a user, and wherein, when program distribution is interrupted thereafter distribution of a program is again resumed, and when, with respect to the program being distributed at the time of the interruption and a program already distributed, the programs at the time of the resumption, compared with programs at the time of the distribution, have newly-received contents, the program having said newly-received contents and a program not distributed yet are distributed according to the priorities.

12. An image distribution apparatus as set forth in claim 2, wherein said operating information includes priorities of a plurality of programs desired by a user, and wherein, when program distribution is interrupted and thereafter when distribution of a program is again resumed, with respect to the program being distributed at the time of the interruption and a program already distributed, the programs at the time of the resumption are compared with the programs at the time of the distribution so that presence of newly-received contents as a result of the comparison causes the program having said newly-received contents and a program not distributed yet to be distributed according to the priorities.

13. A method for distributing image information in a computer having an input part, control part, storage part and output part, comprising:



an image input step of inputting a plurality of types of image information for a single program from an image supply source by said input part;

an image storage step of storing said inputted image information by said storage part;

an operating information input step of inputting operating information including information for specifying a program to be distributed, information relating to a receiver terminal and information relating to a distribution line by said input part;

a step of searching said storage part for said plurality of types of image information on the basis of said program specification information by said control part;

an image selection step of selecting suitable image information corresponding to said receiver terminal information from said plurality of types of the searched image information by said control part;

a distribution line selection step of selecting a suitable distribution line corresponding to said distribution line information by said control part; and

an image output step of outputting said selected image information to said selected distribution line by said output part.

14. A method as set forth in claim 13, wherein said receiver terminal information includes type information relating to whether said receiver terminal

is of a fixed or portable type, said plurality of types of information include a plurality of advertisement image information, and said control part selects suitable advertisement image information corresponding to said type information from said plurality of types of advertisement image information in said image selection step.

15. A method as set forth in claim 13, wherein said storage part, when distribution of a program was interrupted, stores a break point at which the program distribution was interrupted for each user.

16. A method as set forth in claim 14, wherein said storage part, when distribution of a program was interrupted, stores a break point at which the program distribution was interrupted for each user.

17. A method for distribution image information in a computer having an input part, control part, storage part and output part, comprising:

an image input step of inputting image information from an image supply source by said input part;

an image storage step of storing said input image information by said storage part;

an operating information input step of inputting operating information including information for identifying a plurality of programs to be distributed and information relating to priorities for said plurality of programs by said input part; and

a distribution step of specifying programs to be distributed from said stored image information on the basis of said program specification information and distributing image information of said specified programs according to said priorities by said control part,

wherein, when program distribution is interrupted thereafter distribution of a program is again resumed, and when, with respect to the program being distributed at the time of the interruption and a program already distributed, the programs at the time of the resumption, compared with programs at the time of the distribution, have newly-received contents, the program having said newly-received contents and a program not distributed yet are distributed according to the priorities.

18. A computer program product stored on a computer readable medium for distributing image information, said computer program product comprising:

- a code for inputting a plurality of types of image information for a single program from an image supply source;

- a code for storing said plurality of types of input image information;

- a code for inputting operating information including information for identifying a program to be distributed, information relating to a receiver

terminal and information relating to a distribution line;

a code for selecting suitable program image information specified by said program specification information and corresponding to said receiver terminal information from said plurality of types of stored image information;

a code for selecting a suitable distribution line corresponding to said distribution line information; and

a code for outputting said selected image information to said selected distribution line.

19. A computer program produce as set forth in claim 18, wherein said receiver terminal information includes type information relating to whether the receiver terminal is of a fixed or portable type, said plurality of types of image information include a plurality of types of advertisement image information, and suitable advertisement image information corresponding to said type information is selected from said plurality of types of advertisement image information.

20. A computer program product stored on a computer readable medium for distributing image information, said computer program product comprising:

a code for inputting image information from an image supply source;

a code for storing said input image information;

a code for inputting operating information including information for identifying a plurality of programs to be distributed and priorities corresponding to said plurality of programs; and

a code for specifying programs to be distributed from said stored image information on the basis of said program specification information and distributing the image information of said specified programs according to said priorities,

wherein, when program distribution is interrupted thereafter distribution of a program is again resumed, and when, with respect to the program being distributed at the time of the interruption and a program already distributed, the programs at the time of the resumption, compared with programs at the time of the distribution, have newly-received contents, the program having said newly-received contents and a program not distributed yet are distributed according to the priorities.

21. An operating device capable of communicating with an image distribution apparatus for distributing stored image information from an image supply source to a fixed or portable type receiver terminal, comprising:

an operating information generation circuit which generates operating information including information relating to the receiver terminal which

includes type information relating to whether the receiver terminal is of a fixed or portable type, and information relating to a distribution line; and

an operating information transmission circuit which transmits said generated operating information to said image distribution apparatus.

22. An operating device as set forth in claim 21, further comprising:

a card insert slot which inserts a card having a user ID previously stored therein; and

a card information reader which reads said user ID stored in said card inserted in said card insert slot,

wherein said operating information generation circuit includes the user ID read out from said card into the operating information, and said operating information transmission circuit transmits the operating information including the user ID to said image distribution apparatus.

23. An operating device as set forth in claim 21, further comprising:

a short-distance wireless communication circuit capable of wirelessly communicating with the card or portable terminal having the user ID previously stored therein at a short distance to receive the user ID from said card or portable terminal, and

wherein said operating information generation circuit includes the user ID in the operating

information, and said operating information transmission circuit transmits the operating information including the user ID to said image distribution apparatus.

24. An operating device as set forth in claim 21, further comprising:

a storage, when distribution of a program was interrupted, which stores a break point indicative of a position at which the program received from said image distribution apparatus was interrupted.

25. An operating device as set forth in claim 22, further comprising:

a storage, when distribution of a program was interrupted, which stores a break point indicative of a position at which the program received from said image distribution apparatus was interrupted.

26. An operating device as set forth in claim 23, further comprising:

a storage, when distribution of a program was interrupted, which stores a break point indicative of a position at which the program received from said image distribution apparatus was interrupted.